

Range Association of Municipalities & Schools  
Board Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, February 26, 2026 – 6:00 P.M.  
Northeast Service Cooperative Building, Mt Iron, MN

President Kalmi called the Meeting to order at 6:00pm.

**Roll Call of Board:**

Present: **Barb Kalmi (ISD 319 Nashwauk/Keewatin); Steve Biondich (City of Biwabik) ; Shane Hoff (City of Sliver Bay); Bob Berrini (Town of Morse); Rick Blake (City of Grand Rapids);** Angela Campbell (City of Ely); **Ryan Davies (Town of Harris); Dirk Davis (Town of Morcom);** Cathy Erickson (City of Two Harbors); **Jim Fisher (Town of McDavitt); Jed Holewa (City of Chisholm); Sheila Jensen (City of Nashwauk);** Chris Koivisto (ISD 2412 St Louis County); **Lisa Kvas (ISD 712 Mt Iron/Buhl); Ron Pittman (Town of Cherry); John Rauzi (City of Eveleth); Warren Stolp (Town of Nashwauk)**

Absent: City of Hibbing; ISD 318 Grand Rapids Supt; Great Scott Township; City of Buhl; City of Cook; ISD 2909 Rock Ridge Supt; ISD 2711 Mesabi East

Also Present: **Paul Peltier, Executive Director; Kristen Kranz, RAMS Admin Assistant; Don Warwas (ISD 319 Nashwauk/Keewatin); Stephanie Upton (Ellsburg Township; John Upton (Ellsburg Township);** Ted Andron (MN DNR); Mary Robinson (MN DNR); Joe Henderson (MN DNR)

**(Names in bold were present in person; others were via Zoom.)**

**Review and Approve Agenda:**

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Holewa and supported by Biondich. Motion passed unanimously.

**Approve Consent Agenda:**

A motion to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes from January 22, 2026, the letter of support for the Congressional Review Act, and letter of support for Iron Ore Mining Additional Unemployment Benefits Program, was made by Rauzi and supported by Kvas. Motion passed unanimously.

**Finance Committee Report:**

Hoff reported on the Finance Committee Meeting held on February 26, 2026.

1. Expenditures for January 22 – February 25, 2026, totaling \$18,503.77.
2. Profit and Loss Budget vs Actual is 18.2%.
3. Balance Sheet as of February 25, 2026, is \$610,618.97.

A motion to approve the Finance Committee Report was made by Pittman and supported by Holewa. Motion passed unanimously.

**Appearance:**

The Board was joined by Ted Anderson (Assistant Director of Lands and Minerals, Hibbing), Mary Robinson (CFO DNR), and Joe Henderson (Director of Lands and Minerals), via zoom, to discuss the overpayments and underpayments the DNR made in 2025. They explained that a human error in Excel caused the payment mistakes made during quarterly payments to five Counties. Most of the overpayments have been repaid with only \$240,000 left of the \$2.657M to be collected. An after-action review resulted in two changes: simplifying the tracking to make it easier to avoid and detect errors and to add multiple layers of review to catch errors before payments are released.

**Director's Report:**

Executive Director Peltier gave an update on some of his activities over the month of February:

- So far, eight Board Members will be attending the Legislative Dinner on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Bolten and Menk have updated the Sulfate Compliance Data that the Board agreed to last year. Costs for compliance are up 27% (more in some areas) from the report in 2017.

**Old Business:**

- None.

**New Business:**

- A motion to approve a letter of support for St Louis County Canyon Integrated Solid Waste Management Campus was made by Fisher and supported by Biondich. Motion passed unanimously.
- A motion to approve a letter of support for Bois Forte Project Fiber to the Home was made by Koivisto and supported by Stolp. Motion passed unanimously.
- The Board discussed topics to be brought up during the RAMS Legislative Dinner: support for schools and the seasonal recreational tax, pay for resource officers in schools, town aid, legislative priorities, bonding, unfunded mandates, hold harmless, permitting. RAMS Lobby Day was also discussed: Meet with the local delegation and some would like to meet with Senator Hoffman.

**Board Member Updates/Member Floor Privileges:**

- Kvas: MIB/St Louis County school districts have found a Superintendent
- Davis: townships pay into PFML but can't use it
- Kalmi: Because RAMS is an organization established by state statute and receive state revenues (Taconite Production tax), we are required to follow open meeting laws.  
The secret paper ballot election used at the January Organizational Meeting as well as any possible communications between board members prior to the vote on the Executive Director contract at the December 2025 Special Meeting constitutes violations of Minnesota Open Meeting Laws.

**Next Meeting:**

- The next RAMS Meeting will be held at 6pm, on March 26, 2026, at the Northeast Service Cooperative Building.

**Other:**

**Adjournment:**

The meeting was adjourned at 7:00 PM.